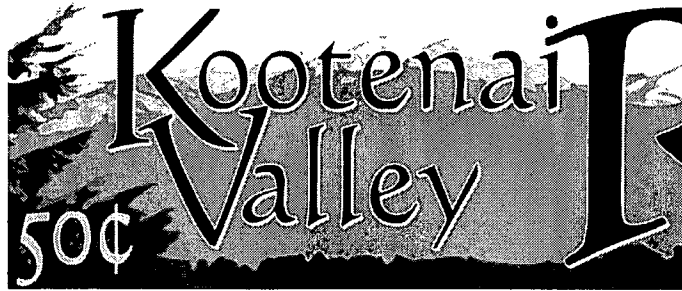


Libby out!

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

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Mayor to EPA: 'Nuts!'

One-word reply given to access request

By Brent Shrum

Kootenai Valley Record

Referencing General Anthony McAuliffe's famed response to a German demand for the surrender of the 101st Airborne Division during the Battle of the Bulge, Libby Mayor Doug Roll offered a one-word reply last week to an Environmental Protection Agency request for access to Riverfront Park: "Nuts!"

Roll's said his e-mailed response to EPA remedial project manager Rebecca Thomas came in reaction to what he perceived to be a threatening tone in the agency's Feb. 28 letter requesting access to the park to begin final cleanup activities. The letter, signed by Thomas, asked Roll to return a signed access agreement by March 14, adding that if a signed agreement is

not received by that date, "EPA will understand that the City of Libby refuses access to allow for remediation of the property."

"What bothered me was their demand," Roll said. "I felt like they were pushing us into a corner."

Roll said his response was intended to be "more symbolic than anything else."

"It was to get them to see that we feel like we're surrounded here," he said.

After lengthy discussions, the city and the EPA have largely come to terms on how to proceed with cleanup at the park, Roll said. The city recently selected an engineering firm to draw up plans for major improvements at the park,

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Nuts

Continued from Page 1 including moving the access road, and Roll said he had hoped to finalize the contract and bring the engineers into the loop before moving forward with the EPA on the remediation of asbestos contamination stemming from the site's former use as a vermiculite processing area.

"It just made sense not to have them design a remediation that wasn't going to march up with what we're going to do

down there," he said.

Roll said he felt "threatened" by the EPA's letter.

"I thought it was very harshly worded," he said. "There's no give there at all."

The one-word reply was not a blanket denial of access, Roll said.

"The council's going to have to make a decision," he said. "It's their decision; it's not my decision. They're going to have to decide whether to accept it or not."